

Resolution for Bethel Annual Meeting January 2010 Approved 225-11

WHEREAS

After careful and prayerful consideration, the conscience-bound people of Bethel do not share a single opinion regarding the 2009 decisions of the ELCA on the issue of homosexuality,

And

WHEREAS

The mission of Bethel is to proclaim the Gospel, prepare our members for outreach and service, and to minister to human needs,

And

WHEREAS

The Bethel Vision Statement proclaims Bethel to be a caring institution utilizing its many resources of people, facilities, and finances to serve members, the community, and is a place to nurture and educate

Be it hereby

RESOLVED

That the members of Bethel will welcome all people as fellow children of God and treat them with kindness and respect. We will continue to work together to support the mission of Bethel in Rochester, Southeastern Minnesota, and throughout the world.

**Resolution 2010-02 Approved 160-77**  
**A Ministry Standard for Bethel Lutheran Church**

**WHEREAS** the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted a social statement on sexuality and four resolutions that approve of sexual relationships outside of marriage and direct a change in the ELCA's ministry standards to allow for people in accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as ordained pastors and lay ministers; and

**WHEREAS** Christians, for the last 2000 years, have taught that homosexual behavior is immoral because of the Bible's consistent, clear proscriptions, in cultures that both approved and disapproved of homosexual behavior; and

**WHEREAS** Bethel Lutheran congregation having met several times (2001, 2004, and 2007) discussing this topic and submitting, in writing, our beliefs to the ELCA, in good Lutheran fashion, seek to stand by the conviction that our conscience is bound to the Word of God, which is our final court of appeal,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Bethel Lutheran Church adopt for a standard for ministry leadership as outlined in the 1990 documents "Visions and Expectations" and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline" shall remain in effect for pastors, interns, and lay ministers serving this congregation (pre-2009 ELCA Assembly). (see below for standard)

Submitted by: Teresa Bierbaum, Barth and Dorothy Crane, Pastor Robert Onkka, Brenda Stowe, Garon and Cheryl Anderson, Jim and Joanne Wignes, Larry and Deb Vomhof, Palmer and Audrey Borgen

1/15/2010

**Resolution 2010-03 Approved 163-74**

**A Marriage Policy Regarding Homosexual Blessings or Unions for Bethel Lutheran Church**

**WHEREAS** it is the desire of this congregation **is** to support our pastors in their ministry, offering guidance and support while they serve God and this congregation; and

**WHEREAS** the pastors are required to handle difficult questions regarding marriage and same-sex blessings or unions;

**WHEREAS** scripture tells us that that “But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh” (Mark 10: 6-8a, NIV) giving us the foundation for Christian marriage between one man and one woman;

**WHEREAS** this congregation wishes to honor and respect this historic and traditional view of marriage; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that all pastors serving Bethel Lutheran Church will decline to officiate at or bless homosexual unions or marriages; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the blessing of homosexual unions or marriages will not be performed on church property or in the name of Bethel Lutheran Church.

Submitted by: Teresa Bierbaum, Barth and Dorothy Crane, Pastor Robert Onkka, Brenda Stowe, Garon and Cheryl Anderson, Jim and Joanne Wignes, Larry and Deb Vomhof, Palmer and Audrey Borgen

01/15/2010

**Resolution 2010-04** Not approved by congregation 110 (yes) to 120 (no)  
**Evaluating Our Relationship with the ELCA**

**WHEREAS** this congregation is a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and

**WHEREAS** the 2009 ELCA Church-wide Assembly adopted the Statement on Sexuality (Gift and Trust) which has created confusion, not clarification, concerning same gender sexual relationships; and

**WHEREAS** the Statement on Sexuality: Gift and Trust, calls us to respect one another's "bound conscience" as we disagree on these matters;

**WHEREAS** this continued disagreement over this issue within the ELCA may be harmful to the congregation and counter-productive as we seek to be faithful witnesses for Christian ministry; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED** that this congregation continue to focus on traditional, biblically-based studies of this issue;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this congregation evaluate its continuing relationship with the ELCA; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this congregation consider its options whether or not to choose to associate with another Lutheran denomination; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the church council of this congregation appoint a committee to carry out the previous resolves and report to the congregation at a special called meeting of the congregation, if possible before the 2011 Annual Meeting.

Submitted by: Teresa Bierbaum, Barth and Dorothy Crane, Pastor Robert Onkka, Brenda Stowe, Garon and Cheryl Anderson, Jim and Joanne Wignes, Larry and Deb Vomhof, Palmer and Audrey Borgen

01/15/2010